

ing these provinces in the form of a republic," to quote the words of William on a former occasion to the States-General, "those who know the conditions, privileges, and ordinances of the country can easily understand that it is hardly possible to dispense with a head or superintendent." In Holland and Zeeland, William was accordingly (much against his will, and in spite of the opposition of Amsterdam) recognised as count in place of the Spanish king, while the Duke of Anjou was installed as sovereign (with the title of duke, count, margrave, lord, according to the constitution of the province) over the rest of the confederation. This dual sovereignty over a number of federal States was a clumsy contrivance. But William would not accept the sovereignty of the whole, and insisted on bringing in Anjou in order to gain the support of France. Holland and Zeeland would, however, be ruled by him and by no other, and thus the confederation had two "shepherds," two figureheads, instead of one. In outward form it was neither republic nor monarchy, but a federal union with two heads, or sovereigns, and both these sovereigns were what we should call parliamentary rulers. They derive their power from the Estates. They are sovereigns by the national will as expressed by the national Parliament. In both cases the office is made hereditary, but the Estates retain the control over the sovereign in both the lesser and the greater confederacy. He cannot make war or peace without their consent. He is bound by the ancient charters and liberties of the respective provinces. He can only select officials of State, provincial and municipal, from a leet nominated by the Estates. Taxation is dependent on their vote, and every important act of government and legislation must have their sanction. In both cases the Estates as representing the people are practically, if not explicitly, sovereign, and constitutional government is strictly guaranteed.

Nay, even this nominal sovereignty proved in both cases but a makeshift. It was the creation of a political contingency, and events speedily made short work of it. The assassination of William (July 1584) within two years of the acceptance of his sovereign dignity (August 1582) deprived Holland and Zeeland of their count; the treachery and incapacity of Anjou soon led to his ignominious retirement to